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ABSTRACT

The Colombo Plan Staff College for Technician Education, Manila, the Philippines, a very small institution in terms of people and resources, has made a significant impact influencing numerous ministries of education to inculcate entrepreneurship training into technical/vocational education. The college has evolved an effective process for developing recognition of the need for a new subject and encouraging its adoption using a three-level approach. It consists of regional, subregional, and in-country workshops. The process results in a top-down introduction of the subject by developing endorsement, support, and commitment to implementation from the senior decision makers through to the practitioner level. The regional workshops are intended to establish the need for a topic at the most senior governmental levels. Senior executives from all member countries are invited to a workshop to explore the topic. Subregional workshops are attended by subordinates nominated by the senior executives. The objective is to gain commitment from the participants to implement new methodologies, in this instance, entrepreneurial curricula. At the request of the member country, the college will present an in-country workshop for key teachers and junior administrators to dispense curricular tips, training tools, and techniques. In the case of entrepreneurship training, the process has worked very well and surprisingly quickly. The experience of Bangladesh is a good case example. (YLB)

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ED 366 808

The Mouse and the Elephant and Entrepreneurship Training

by: Glen Witter, M.B.A., Ph.D

At point of writing, Vancouver Community College had just concluded a Sub-regional Course For Entrepreneurship Development For Rural/Community Polytechnic Students in which fifteen (15) participants, comprising ministry of education executives, principals and key faculty from eight (8) countries (Thailand [1], Korea [2], Malaysia [2], Indonesia [2], the Philippines [3], Fiji [1], Tonga [2] and Papua New Guinea [1]) "experienced" entrepreneurship training and methodologies leading to the development and implementation of curricula. This was the eleventh two-week sub-regional workshop of it nature which The Colombo Plan Staff College For Technician Education has conducted over the past four years. In a way, it is a mile stone as it marks the end of a five year project sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which has been one of the sponsors providing technical assistance via the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) and its member institution, Vancouver Community College, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

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Introduction

The title of this article alludes to the parable of the mouse and the elephant but in this context should be associated with the idea that the Colombo Plan Staff College For Technician Education, Manila, the Philippines, a very small institution in people and resources, has made a significant impact influencing numerous ministries of education (representing a total population in excess of one and one half billion people) to inculcate entrepreneurship training into technical/vocational education. The Colombo Plan Staff College has provided a venue from which to effectively reach their seventeen (17) member countries and others, such as the Maldives, Tonga and Palau.

The College has evolved an effective process for developing recognition of the need for a new subject and encouraging its adoption using a three-level approach. It consists of regional, sub-regional and in-country workshops. The process results in a top-down introduction of the subject by developing endorsation, support and commitment to implementation from the senior decision makers through to the practitioner level. In this particular case, the concept of entrepreneurship training, the process has worked very well and surprisingly quickly. In many countries, the concept of entrepreneurship training for technical/vocational students was brand new. There have now been many adoptions. In other countries, the influence generated by the College has served to help expand that which existed by increasing the portfolio of tools, techniques, methodologies and training resources and, in many instances, to justify additional funding.

The Process

The adoption process follows the goal of seeking continuing endorsation from the top levels of government and assisting to encourage a continuing flow of endorsation down, through various levels of bureaucracy, to the practitioner level. In product marketing terms, the College: creates strong recognition of a need; how it can be satisfied by new curricula and teacher training, and; develops the resolve to implement training. As mentioned above, the adoption process is segmented into three distinct levels: regional workshops; sub-regional workshops; and in-country workshops with technical assistance.

Regional Workshops

The regional workshops are intended to establish the need for a topic at the most senior governmental levels. Senior executives from all member countries are invited to a workshop to explore the topic. The workshop is ably enriched by world class experts as senior consultants and there is usually a series of presentations from United Nations agencies which have recognized the need and wish to encourage action. The workshop goal is to develop commitment on the part of the participants to recognize the need and to develop a specific proposal for change in their country. Each participant develops a position paper to take home and all must present their papers to their fellow participants. Upon returning home, the participants are requested to nominate subordinates to attend sub-regional workshops on the topic.

Sub-Regional Workshops

Sub-regional workshops follow a two week format in which the objective is to gain commitment from the participants to implement new methodologies or, in this instance, entrepreneurial curricula upon return to their respective countries. Emphasis is placed on providing an "experience" of entrepreneurship training and methodologies leading into the development of curricula and an implementation plan. The participants are a mixture of middle level bureaucrats, principals, division and department heads, curricula writers and key faculty.

The workshop flows through a number of stages taking the pattern of establishing the need, experiencing the major subject fields and training methodologies, and developing commitment to implement. A variety of motivational techniques were employed ranging from field visits and visits of role models to group dynamics and experiential exercises:

Stage 1 of the workshop opens with remarks by the College's Director, Dr. C.K. Basu and the presentation of country reports by the participants.

Stage 2 starts with a summary of the importance of entrepreneurship inculcation. Examples from many parts of the world are used which are built into the presentation of a variety of models. There is also the recognition of the need to custom tailor training for a target audience.

Stage 3 provides exposure to major areas within the average small business/ entrepreneurship program:

- self-awareness.self-assessment
- finding and evaluating business opportunities
- the business plan process
- market research
- mentoring

All are presented in an experiential manner in which the participants are exposed to a variety of course enrichment methods ranging from creativity exercises through primary market research field work (honey roasted peanuts or skin cream) and mentoring of a business plan (role plays).

Stage 4 entails reviewing DACUM ("Developing A Curriculum") and small business curricula. This leads to the development of a curriculum for a specified target audience.

Stage 5 involves the planning and development of a project by each individual which they may implement upon return to their institution. This stage also includes the development of a full implementation plan. The program culminates on the last day with the formal presentation of the plans to Dr. C.K. Basu and the program faculty.

The program is enriched with visits to business firms, complimentary institutions, and by role models, institutions. An example of particular note was a visit by Madam Giuang, Director General of Technical and Vocational Education for the Philippines. She shared her philosophy, implementation methodology and successes since first encouraged by the Colombo Plan Staff College faculty to inculcate entrepreneurship training four years ago.

Participants returning to their country are expected to initiate a change toward inculcating the topic within their field of authority. Often, and because their superiors have attended a workshop, there is the foundation of support necessary to encourage implementation. Experience has taught the College that there may need to be a number of workshops attended by a core of personnel before major inculcation takes root. However, positive proof of endorsation is reflected in the request by a country for the College to present an in-country workshop for practitioners and/or assist in implementation of curricula.

In-country Workshops and Technical Assistance

At the request of the member country, the college will present an in-country workshop. This is a bellwether serving to identify senior level commitment to inculcation. The typical participants within a country will mainly be at the practitioner level. This usually includes key teachers, and junior administrators. The intention at this level is to dispense curricula tips, training tools and techniques.

Example: Bangladesh

The experience of Bangladesh is a good case example for the implementation of entrepreneurship training within technical/vocational education. Three participants from Bangladesh attended a sub-regional workshop held in New delhi, India in March, 1990 and mild interest was generated within Bangladesh upon their return. This was followed with a sub-regional workshop held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in March of 1991 in which six participants were from Bangladesh. More important, the venue of Bangladesh afforded an opportunity to develop renewed attention by senior bureaucrats and politicians to the need for entrepreneurship training. This sub-regional workshop served as a catalyst. The Government of Bangladesh entered into the process of conducting a needs analysis and developing endorsation, through a consultative committee process, of all levels which would be involved in the topic's inculcation within selected curricula. From a position paper evolved a committee to design curricula for vocational, technical and academic post-secondary education. From the technical education side, this action culminated in an in-country workshop in March, 1993 for thirty (30) key faculty and administrators. They reviewed the proposed curricula and selected training material. Part of the training material was supplied by the Colombo Plan Staff College For Technician Education in the form of resource modules which Vancouver Community College had written for the purpose of selective adaptation and translation.

Score Card

The entrepreneurship training inculcation process (a formal evaluation is pending) has been adopted at various stages:

ADOPTIONS GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO COLOMBO PLAN STAFF TRAINING COLLEGE	PROGRAMS ENHANCED	PENDING IMPLEMENTATION
Thailand	Singapore	Maldives*
Sri Lanka	Indonesia	Bhutan
Bangladesh	Nepal	Palau*
Malaysia	Tonga*	Pakistan
Papua New Guinea		
Fiji		
India		
Iran		
Philippines		

* Notates participants from non-Colombo Plan Staff College For Technician Education member countries.

Modules written by Vancouver Community College for the Colombo Plan Staff College For Technician Education entrepreneurship inculcation program are in use in all of the member countries via the returning participants. As well, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Thailand have officially adopted and adapted the material at the Ministry of Education level. Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Mayanmar and Sri Lanka have expressed interest.

The success of this project is an accomplishment in which all sponsors can take great pride. The tangible proof, the implementation and enhancement of entrepreneurship curricula in technical/vocational institutions, is found in the majority of the participating countries. At point of writing, the Colombo Plan Staff College For Technician Education has been successful, serving as a catalyst, to encourage senior level administrators and "product champions", to develop entrepreneurship inculcation within technical/ vocational institutions but there remains the need to follow up with in-country teacher training workshops and curricula adaptation assistance. Inertia has been overcome and now remains the need to maintain momentum until adoption is entrenched.

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